

our society and the basic building block of our communities. Governor Leavitt is both a good man and a strong leader. I look forward to working with him on the health care issues that affect our families so directly.

I urge my colleagues to vote to confirm Governor Leavitt as the next Secretary of Health and Human Services.

Mr. President, it is my understanding the other side has yielded back their remaining time. Knowing no other Republican wishes to speak, I yield back the remainder of our time, as well.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming yields back the remainder of the time on the Republican side. All time having expired, under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to a vote on the confirmation of the nomination.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Michael O. Leavitt, of Utah, to be Secretary of Health and Human Services.

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The President will be notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will return to legislative session.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. ENZI. I ask unanimous consent there now be a period for morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AGENDA FOR COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions is actively working in all four of those areas as specified in the title of our committee as there are major initiatives that need to be accomplished in each of those areas.

I have found that each Member who is working on an issue in any of those four areas—and I am not just talking about members of the committee, I am talking Senators as a whole—believe their issue should be the first issue to come up in the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions. As Chairman, I believe that we should work like the National Institutes of Health; that is, those issues that stand the best chance of making progress will get a higher priority. We will be working in all of these four issue areas because they are immensely critical to the people of the United States.

As a brand new Committee Chairman, I am asking all of my colleagues that when a Member has an idea in the areas of health, education, labor, or pensions, that you share it with me. I can bring the Member up to date on all

of the people who need to work on that issue so I can get them involved. It would be most appreciated. In addition, it would allow us to work prime pieces of your bill into any committee bill that comes out.

On a number of issues out there, there are multiple groups, and in many cases, bipartisan groups, working on their own bill. The way we will have to address those, of course, is to have the committee be the referee on which sections of which bills get into the final bill. I can assure Members we will look most favorably on Members who have shared with us in advance. If it is a matter of who is going to get the credit, I don't care on that. I will help preserve credit for your idea.

It would be helpful for me as the new chairman to have some kind of an idea of what Members are working on and what the timeframe is. We will let Members know how we are working on the same issue and our timeframe for the issue.

I have four outstanding subcommittee chairmen, and they have already sat down, looked at a list of things they need to accomplish, and together we have set some priorities and have begun to put together action plans on each of those bills. I have met with Senator KENNEDY to take a look at the 20-plus bills that need to be reauthorized before September 5. We are trying to organize those so that we can get as many of those completed as possible and to see where there is agreement; and where there is agreement, perhaps we can move them along faster allowing us the opportunity to concentrate on the other bills that need more work.

I didn't say the ones which we are in opposition to—because I know on most issues around here, if there is not agreement on the two conflicting ways to move a bill forward, there is often a third way that can be derived. A lot of the time the way committees work, as we get involved in an issue, is if there is a section that people do not agree on, quite often we can have those Members interested in that section go off for a little bit and hammer it out. Typically, they come back with the third way that they can agree upon. Quite often the committee agrees on it as well.

In committee, usually, we can get agreement on 80 percent of an issue. Generally, the 80 percent is what is passed through the committee if there is bipartisan support, if it appears to have bipartisan support. Unfortunately for the American public and television, when people see us debate in the Senate it is on that other 20 percent, the 20 percent we did not agree on in committee, and for political reasons may not agree on no matter how long the debate continues. When we vote, after all the amendments are tallied, quite often we go back to the 80 percent that came out of committee with bipartisan support.

I am suggesting to my colleagues that if we can go by an 80-percent rule,

do the 80 percent we agree upon in committee, bring it to the Senate floor, and wrap it pretty quickly, then we can skip that other 20 percent. Overall, we could get a lot more done around here. In addition, it would be more collegial and it would lead us to being able to get more things done on a bipartisan basis.

So we are going to be trying that in this committee and seeing how it works. I hope it does not turn out to be the grand experiment that failed. I hope it turns out to be a model for a way we can have a Senate that is more agreeable and working towards solutions for the American people.

That is the approach we have taken on every issue that has been mentioned here today. We have already been working on action plans for those things to see if there is a way we can come up with an 80-percent package. If we can, we will move them along much faster than what people expect. But it will take a lot of work and a lot of concentration and, incidentally, quite a few hearings, too.

I have learned under Senator GRAHAM and Senator SARBANES and Senator SHELBY—those are all Banking Committee chairmen—that one of the ways to handle an issue is to try to get together everybody you can who is an expert on the particular area you are doing and draw on their knowledge—these are practitioners who have actually worked in the trenches on the idea—and gather the information from them and see if there is not, again, an 80-percent agreement.

There should not be a shortage of ideas in the United States. We are the idea country. If we can find some way to simmer those down and put them out as legislation, that helps people. That is what the HELP Committee is all about.

I look forward to working with my colleagues and seeing what sorts of things we can do to help health care in the United States so we can have more accessible, lower cost, higher quality health care. As you can tell from previous discussion, that covers a whole range of issues. The Presiding Officer at the moment, of course, is interested in the associated health plans, and so are a whole lot of other people in the Chamber.

We have talked about drug reimportation. We have a bill in that comes out of a task force, Senate file 4. It comes out of a task force last year that was led by Senator GREGG, who is my predecessor as chairman of this committee, a diligent, hard-working, knowledgeable task force leader who helped us put together about 15 bills that would do exactly what I talked about: increase access, reduce costs, help the quality. Those are included in a bill. It is not definitive, it is not the final answer, but it is a starting point for us to go on this great debate.

In education, we are going to do an education piece that makes sure people understand there are lifelong education